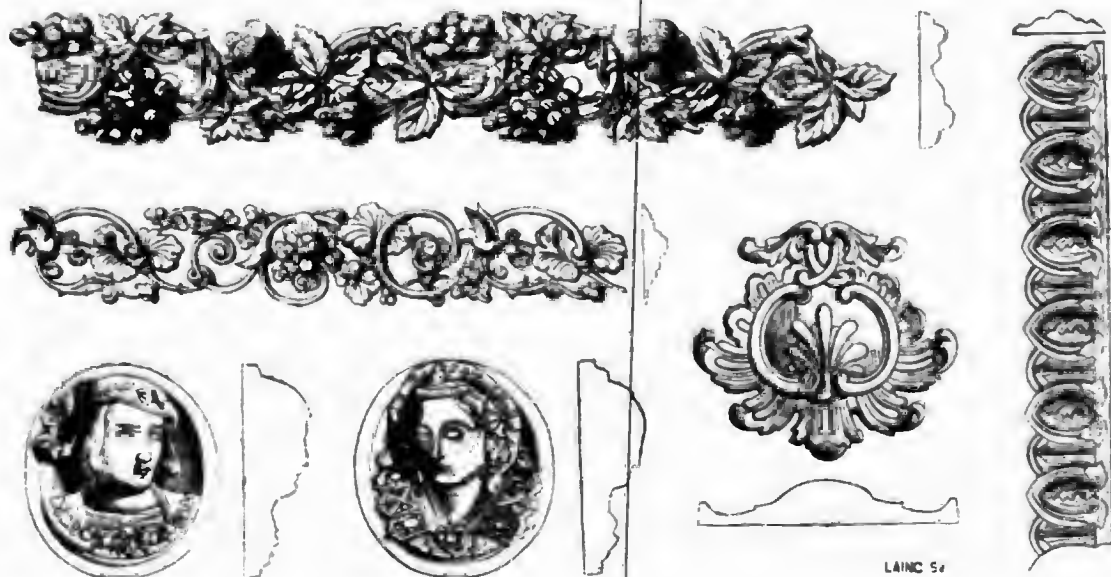


CANNABIC DECORATIONS.



the nave from the aisles: the semicircular arches have incised zigzags, and the inner soffits the same ornament, of more finished character. The triforium is large, as in the great Norman churches at Caen. The floor of this, by the way, is removed, so that the aisles include the triforium in their height.

Each window in the clerestory consists of one large semicircular opening, with a smaller on each side. There is a fine lofty semicircular arch at the east end, formerly the junction with the transepts, but beyond this nothing remains. At the west end the arches are pointed.

The whole is whitewashed, and has a miserable flat ceiling. At the west end there is an elegant doorway of the Decorated Period, and some pretty bits of the same period near it, and at the east end. The upper part of the tower was messed when rebuilt in 1798. Amongst the noticeable things inside is an Elizabethan monument in a deplorable state of repair, with effigies of the husband and wife lying uncomfortably one over the other on their sides, and of six sons and four daughters, below. There is a memorial here, too, to Francis Wollaston, 1654; and one to Mr. Thomas Leverton, architect to the "Land Revenue," and other public offices, who was a benefactor to the church, and died in 1824.

Waltham Cross, which is on the other side of the line, is fast falling into decay again.

CANNABIC DECORATIONS.

WHEN describing the construction and decoration of the Royal Italian Opera House, Covent Garden, two years ago, we alluded incidentally to the patent cannabic composition, of which all the applied ornaments there are formed. The use of this valuable substance has been kept back through circumstances, but the patentee is now again bringing it before the public. The staple material is hemp or flax,—as its name imports.

The hemp employed is the "shorts" of the rope manufactory, or the "waste" of the flax-spinning mill. It is sorted, freed from foreign substances, and mixed with a heated resinous compound. After being saturated with the mixture, the material is subjected to great pressure, by means of rollers, and turned out in sheets of about twenty superficial feet, varying in thickness according to the nature of the purpose for which it is intended. In this state it is black in colour, close in texture, hard to the touch, and very difficult to tear. It retains scarcely any trace of a resinous odour, and, when struck, sounds like a tinfoil board. The process of manufacturing the sheets into mouldings, bas-reliefs, scrolls, pendant bosses, panels, floral ornaments, &c., is performed by hand.

and the many other ornamental objects for which it may be employed, is by means of metallic dies, formed in a peculiar manner, which are fitted to a hydraulic press of very great power.

It is an Italian invention, very light, and it takes gilding. It has another recommendation in the shape of cheapness. The patentee has a large collection of patterns, many of which show great sharpness and boldness: these all-important qualities could of course be further obtained by using a greater degree of mechanical power. The material is worth the attention of architects, builders, and exporters.

An extensive Album has been published for the patentee, by Mr. Webb, which will be found useful by ornamental and others, even without reference to the material in question.

The annexed engravings are representations of some of the specimens in hand. The top scroll is 4 in. wide; the second scroll 3 in.

THE CHURCH OF KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.

The miserable and unecclesiastical appearance presented by the tower of Kingston Church, strikes every one who visits that pleasant and important town; and we have recently received more than one communication, begging us to bring this under the attention of the parish authorities. We are led by this circumstance to say, as we can of our own knowledge, that the churchwardens are fully aware of the discredit brought on the town by the condition of the church, but that they have not yet been able, at least they were not when we last heard from them, to induce the parishioners to permit the expenditure which would be required.

In the autumn of last year, the conductor of this journal was called in by them to report on the "actual repairs necessary for the safety of the tower and church."

The tower, which stands on four piers and arches (seen inside the church), appears to have been rebuilt in the year 1708, to the extent of about 27 feet downwards from the top. This part is of brickwork with stone dressings, and in character laughably different from the original. A height of about 33 feet above the gutters of the nave roof remains of the old tower, including four large and handsome bellry windows, buttresses at the angles, &c., and is seen to be of the perpendicular period of pointed architecture, and constructed mainly of stone.

This part is in a miserable, if not dangerous state of repair, considering the vibration caused by the bells when ringing, and for mere safety-sake, should be attended to, as also should other parts of the fabric. After point-

ing out what were the repairs actually needed, and their probable cost, the reporter said;—

"I should not be performing my duty if I were not to remind you that this would after all be but patching, and that the present incongruous aspect of the tower ought not to be retained. I would suggest that the parish should consider whether it is not desirable, when repairing the tower, that an endeavour should be made to render the whole of it consistent, and in accordance with its original character, which might be done without a great expenditure, by facing the whole with flint, continuing up the buttresses, adding battlements, a cornice, and pinnacles, and rearranging the dial."

"The ancient connection of the original church at Kingston with the sovereigns of England, renders this structure nationally interesting, and should ensure for it careful treatment. My desire that this should not be lost sight of, must be my excuse for going in some degree beyond the terms of the resolution."

"GEORGE GODWIN."

Lysons gives a list of seven if not eight Saxon kings crowned here, beginning with Edward the Elder, A.D. 900.* In a record of a council held here in 838, it is called *Kyningestun*, *fomoro illa locas*. The stone on which, according to tradition, the kings were placed for the ceremony of coronation (king's-stone), still remains in the market-place, and according to the county newspaper is about to be erected on a pedestal for preservation.

THE BUILDERS' BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION.

ANNIVERSARY DINNER.

THE anniversary dinner of the Builders' Benevolent Institution took place on Tuesday, the 4th inst., at the London Tavern, when between 200 and 300 gentlemen connected with architecture and the various departments of the building trade assembled.

Mr. Wm. Cubitt, M.P., the President of the Institution, occupied the chair, and was supported by Mr. Grissell, F.S.A., Mr. H. E. Kendall, Mr. Kendall, jun., Mr. John Taylor, Mr. Lapidge, Mr. W. Treas, Mr. Penrose, Mr. T. Piper, Mr. S. Bird, Mr. Eales, Mr. Tyerman, Mr. Gardiner, Mr. Marsh, Mr. George Bird, Treasurer, Mr. J. Higgs, Mr. G. Spencer Smith, Mr. Nesham, Mr. Stirling, Mr. W. Lee, Mr. T. Cozens, Mr. H. Burton, Mr. Thorn, Mr. Dunnage, Mr. John Soward, jun., Mr. Knight, &c.

When proposing the health of Prince Albert, in the course of the usual list of toasts, the Chairman said he felt assured that the deep interest which the Prince Consort always manifested in the advancement of art of every description, would render this toast peculiarly acceptable to the present assembly.

* In a chapel adjoining the church, dedicated to St. Mary, there were formerly figures of some of these kings; they were destroyed by the fall of the chapel in 1790.